

Training Tomorrow's Scientists

Investing in the next generation of stem cell scientists creates a trained workforce for California and ensures that the state has young scientists ready to continue the search for cures. Altogether, we've helped thousands of young people pursue their dream—a dream which would otherwise not have come true—as well as supported dozens of young faculty members as they establish their careers in California.

High School Students (SPARK)

Not every student will go on to become a scientist or a doctor, but they all should have a chance to understand a field of science that is changing the course of medicine and human health. This is why we created a stem cell curriculum for high school classes. Now teachers in California and across the country have resources and hands-on activities to teach their students the fundamentals of regenerative medicine, a field that will hopefully offer treatments for those students and their descendants in the future.

And with our SPARK Awards (formerly Creativity Awards), high school students interested in a career in science can get a head start on their dream. We support high school students throughout California in stem cell research summer internships in research labs at prominent California institutions. In past years, we have asked those students to show us the value of their experiences in blogs, videos and images.

You can see their enthusiasm in action on our Through their Lens series.

Undergraduate and Master's Students (Bridges)

For our undergraduate and masters-level students, Bridges to Stem Cell Research Awards provide coursework and internships at California state schools and community colleges, followed by paid internships at the state's top university and industry stem cell labs. These programs train young scientists to fill jobs in California's growing stem cell research sector—filling a void predicted by both California Life Sciences Association and the California Public Policy Institute. The programs' first graduates are already being hired into skilled research technician positions and being accepted into medical and graduate schools in large numbers.

Graduate and post-doctoral Students

Our first round of funding in 2006 was to support Training grants to make sure California had scientists with the training needed to develop stem cell-based treatments. These awards supported graduate students and post-graduate students carrying out stem cell research in California institutions. Many of our training grant recipients have gone on to start their own stem cell research labs as faculty members and are carrying forward stem cell advances for the next generation of stem cell treatments.

New Faculty

Although their formal education is over, new faculty members need support while they are starting up their labs. CIRM has provided a stable source of funding for some of the best young faculty members through our New Faculty Awards, which have helped them establish their stem cell research programs in California.

